SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE : As I mentioned, overall production in steel all over the world is going through a recession, including in Japan. Japan is the major steel-producing country. There, not only in respect of cars, but in respect of various other products also, where steel is the major raw material, the whole line of manufacture of these types of products, to some extent, has been affected .

SHRI K. R. MALKANI : Mr. Chairman, Sir, manual mining need not necessarily always be more expensive than mechanised mining. Has the Government conducted any study in the matter ? Nobody suggests that one thing should be completely stopped and another given full play. A balance has to be there. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Government has made any study of the matter as to how to balance these two things.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE : Sir, I would pass on this suggestion to my colleague, the hon. Minister of Mines.

Excise Duty Relief to Consumers

*485. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : †

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 5 given in the Rajya Sabha on 26th July, 1993 and state :

(a) the names of industries which have failed to pass on the excise reliefs or have partially reduced the prices;

(b) whether Government have made any assessment to know the approximate amount of excise duty relief passed on the consumers and the amount of excise relief retained by the trade and if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the response of the Ministries as referred to in parts (c) and (d) of the answer and what further action each economic Ministry has taken in this regard;

(d) whether any action against any industry has been taken so far for not adhering to Government's instructions; and

(e) whether it is mandatory on the trade to pass on the excise relief to the consumers ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A. K. ANTONY) : (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) In the budget of 1993-94, large duty concessions were announced covering a variety of products. In the meeting with the Minister of Civil Supplies, while the industry associations claimed that duty concessions were passed on to the consumers, the consumer organisations disputed the claim. As this Ministry did not have any infrastructure to verify the claims, it requested Bureau of Industrial Costs & Prices to conduct a quick study on some ten items to see whether the duty concessions had been passed on to the consumers. The BICP conducted a study of all the ten items in

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi.

41 brands and 138 packsizes/varieties covering 101 industries. According to the report, the industries relating to cosmetics, drugs and manmade fibre have not passed on the benefits of duty concessions in full.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers has indicated that in regard to drugs under price control, the benefit of excise duty concessions has been passed on to the consumers and in the case of de-controlled category of drugs, according to the information furnished by the organisation of pharmaceutical producing industry, about 254 such items showed a price reduction ranging between 0.76 and 2.05% on account of excise duty concessions announced.

The Ministry of Industry has informed that under the Industries (Development and Regulations) Act, 1951 and the Registration and Licensing of Industrial Undertakings Rules, 1952 administered by them, there is no provision for regulation/control of prices of commodities manufactured by such industries. However, the Ministry took up the matter with various industry associations for passing on the benefits from time to time.

The Ministry of Commerce in a study note indicated that in case of tea prices, which are by and large governed by the auction system and laws of demand and supply, companies had announced reduction in the prices after budget announcement. The Ministry has further directed the Tea Board to impress upon the major tea producers the desirability of bringing down the prices.

(e) The Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue, has informed that there is no provision in the Central excise laws to ensure that excise duty concessions are passed on to the consumers.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Sir, this question has been asked with reference to an earlier Unstarred Question. In that, we had put certain queries to the Ministry. One of them was whether an amount of Rs. 1200 crores of excise duty relief which was to be passed on to the consumers had actually been passed on to the consumers or not. Now, I would like to know whether this quantum of relief which was announced in the last year's Budget and which was to be passed on to the consumers had actually been passed on to them or not.

I am asking this question again because from your statement, it appears that you had conducted certain studies. The details of these studies have not been given. You have not given the names of the companies which have passed on the benefit or the names of the companies which have failed to do it. Last year, you gave two weeks' time to the industry to convince the Ministry that the excise duty reliefs had been passed on to the consumers. May I know whether your Ministry has ascertained that these benefits have been passed on? If not, out of this amount of Rs. 1200 crores, how much has been passed on? Which are the industries which have failed to pass on the benefits? I would also like to know whether it is a fact that some of the industries, instead of passing on the excise duty reliefs to the consumers, have raised their prices. They have not only duped the Ministry or the Government officials, but they are also charging higher prices from the consumers.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Sir, I would place a copy of the BICP report on the Table of the House.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Sir, this question has been hanging fire for the last one year.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : I am saying that I would place a copy of the BICP report on the Table of the House.

Regarding the question of passing on the benefits to the consumers, after the announcement last year, we held a number of meetings with various industrialists and consumer organisations. There was a dispute. The industrialists said that they had already passed on the benefits to the consumers, but the consumers' organisations disputed that claim. Then, we sought the assistance of the BICP. They have studied 20 units. That report is with the Government. Since these items are controlled by the various administrative Ministries, our Ministry has sent this report to these Ministries for taking follow-up action. As per that, the administrative Ministries took certain follow-up action.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Let the hon. Minister give the names of the industries which have been mentioned by the BICP. Please tell us frankly. Let this be a transparent thing before the country. We want to know who are the defaulters. This is a very serious matter.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL : This is a serious matter. This is a fraud on the Government. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : I am prepared to place the entire report on the Table of the House. I would place the entire report on the Table of the House. You could go into that.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : You would get all the information. (*Interruptions*)

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : What action have you taken ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : After receiving the report...,

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : You have circulated the report to the various Ministries. But the question is whether the defaulting industries have been subjected to some punishment or not.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Sir, our Ministry does not have any control over these industries. These industries come under the various administrative Ministries. Therefore, we have sent the report to these Ministries and requested them to take follow-up action. As per that, many Ministries have done certain things. They have taken action. Many of the industries reduced their prices. Three industries—manmade fibre, drugs and cosmetics—have not fully passed on the benefits to the consumers. Therefore, we have requested the administrative Ministries concerned to take follow-up action. They have done certain things. Ultimately, it is the Finance Ministry which has to go into it. Under the law, we are not in a position to take any legal action. We cannot compel them; we can only persuade them. Our Ministry has taken certain persuasive actions. Some results are there. I will place the entire report before the House.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Sir, even my first question has not been answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think the Minister has answered it, because he said it is up to the other Ministries. And the legal position also he has explained.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Sir, it is not so simple. If he says that the report of the BICP would be placed before the House, he must also be knowing the contents of the report—how much amount of this excise duty has not yet been passed on. Certain industries, you say, have passed it on ; certain industries, you say, have not passed it on. From newspaper

reports we learn that there are cosmetic companies and other companies dealing with medicines that have not only not passed on these reliefs but have increased the prices—they have adjusted their profitability in that manner. So my question is, are you serious about it? Out of these Rs. 1,200 crores which have been promised to be passed on to the consumers, you can at least tell us how much of it has not been passed on. This is the first part of my question. The BICP report simply deals with it, whether a particular industry has been able to pass on the excise duty relief to the customers or not. But what about the quantum? Is it just Rs. 200 crores which have been passed on and they have duped to the extent of Rs. 1,000 crores or is it Rs. 1,000 crores which have been passed on to the consumers and only Rs. 200 crores are pending? I want to know it. It is more than a year.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY: Sir, as far as consumer affairs are concerned, we are only the nodal Ministry; we have no administrative control over any of these industries, and we have no mechanism also to verify these things. Only the administrative Ministries can give the details. So, without hiding anything, we will place the entire report before the House.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: Now he says in this statement, "The Ministry of Industry has informed that under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 and the Registration and Licensing of Industrial Undertakings Rules, 1952 administered by them, there is no provision for regulation/control of prices of commodities manufactured by such industries. However, the Ministry took up the matter with various industry associations for passing on the benefits from time to time." Then he says, "The Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue, has informed that there is no provision in the Central excise laws to ensure that excise duty concessions are passed on to the consumers." Sir, it was the Ministry of Finance which has declared this revenue to be passed on to the consumers. I want to know whether the Ministry of Finance was sleeping or whether the Ministries of Commerce and Civil Supplies were sleeping. I do not understand why you play such a fraud on Parliament and the people of this country. If you don't have any such powers, why do you announce this sort of a concession? May I ask, are you going to enact and make certain changes and amendments both in the Industries law and the Excise law, so that whatever benefits are given to the consumers actually reach the consumers? I want a categorical answer about it.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY: Sir, concessions are announced for the industries year after year, in most of the years, in the budget. Last year our Ministry took special care to see that at least we monitor these things. So we took the initiative, we conducted a study through the BICP and we pressurised the administrative Ministries to follow it up. As a result, all the administrative Ministries took follow-up action. Many of the industries were compelled to reduce the prices, and consumers also are now aware which are the industries which have got the benefits, what is the report of the BICP and that some of the industries are not passing on the benefit to them. So the consumers are also now in a position to persuade the industries. So, that is the role we have played as a Ministry. Looking at the interests of the consumers, we have done this.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : As a nodal Ministry are you suggesting that the Industries law and the revenue law should be changed so that necessary provisions are incorporated that whatever relief is to be passed on to the consumers is actually passed on to them? Are you going to suggest that this sort of defects should be removed ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Sir, we have taken up this issue also with the Ministry of Finance. The Finance Ministry is of the view that in the existing law there is no provision and, even after amending it, no purpose is going to be served. That is the view of the Finance Ministry even now.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI : Sir, both from the written reply and the answers given here, two facts are very clear : first, that Mr. Antony is a good man and his Ministry has been trying to do its utmost. But, in the second place, it also reflects the confusion and fragmentation within the Government itself. Promises about refund of the excise concessions were made and assurances were doled out both by the Finance Minister and the Minister of Civil Supplies, but that has not happened. That is why, part (a) of my supplementary is : what kind of institutional mechanism has been either set up or designed now apart from *ad hoc* meetings for interaction between the various Ministries, to ensure continuing and coordinated approach and to ensure that your directives and your promises to the people really fructify and that indirectly the industry is not able to defeat the purposes of what you promise to the people ? This is part (a) of my supplementary.

Part (b) of my supplementary is that it has already been mentioned by the Minister that the Finance Ministry considers it not worthwhile to make any changes in the excise legislation in this regard and to authorise the Department of Revenue to carry out radis for violaions of the conditions of various concessions and so on and so forth. Similarly, he is also not very hopeful about what the Ministry of Industry is going to do. I would like to bring, through you, to the Minister's notice that it looks as if, like multinationals as well as mafia, both international and national, the Indian industry also wants... (*Interruptions*)

They want to flout all the assurances and do not want to respect the spirit of concessions that you have given and for the purpose for which they were given. May I, therefore, know from the Minister, in view of the helplessness of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Industrial Development, whether his Ministry will authorise the consumer courts to take *suo motu* notice of this kind of default on the part of the various industries ? I could read out the names...

MR. CHAIRMAN : You need not do it.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : I agree with the hon. Member that the Indian industry, while asking for more and more liberalisation, should change its attitude. Liberalisation does not mean freedom for industry only. They should also willingly have some kind of social accountability. I fully agree with you.

As far as our Ministry is concerned, our role is three-fold. One of the most important roles is to generate consumer awareness. We are doing our level best.

The second is to persuade industries to pass on the benefits voluntarily to the consumers. Because of our consistent persuation, many industries have done that. Some of them are not obliging.

Our third responsibility is to bring this fact to the notice of the administrative Ministries and to persuade them to take action. That also we are regularly doing. We will continue to do that.

Beyond that our Ministry is not in a position to do anything else. Because of the consistent action taken by us, now there is more consumer awareness. The consumers are also questioning the industries. The industries are also now gradually beginning to recognise that hereafter they will not be able to continue like this. More and more industries are now realising that consumers are also becoming more powerful. So, we have done that part of our duty, and we will continue to do that.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : Mr. Chairman, Sir, as far as the Civil Supplies Minister is concerned, he is well-meaning. He tries his best to see that the concessions are passed on to the consumers. But the administrative Ministries are not giving the co-operation which is required. There was a discussion in the House. Once the excise duties were reduced, but they were not passed on to the consumers. There was a decision by the Supreme Court on, what is called, the principle of enrichment at the cost of consumers. When Mr. Madhu Dandavate was the Finance Minister, this was discussed threadbare in the House.

And the Supreme Court had decided that wherever possible, the concessions should be passed on to the consumers ; wherever it is not possible to pass on, the Government should consider transferring that amount to the Consumers' Welfare Fund. It was amounting to thousands of crores of rupees. Prof. Madhu Dandavate had given an assurance in the House that the Government would constitute a Consumers' Welfare Fund, but so far the Finance Minister has not taken any action on that. The industrialists and middlemen are robbing the consumers. I would like to know whether the Minister of Civil Supplies will take up with the Finance Minister to knock out this amount and see that amount is given to the Consumers' Welfare Fund.

Sir, I am sorry to see the last part of the answer given. "The Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue has informed that there is no provision in the Central Excise laws to include the excise duty concessions to be passed on to the consumers." But if I remember correctly, when this concession was announced. I think in the Budget speech itself the Finance Minister had announced that if this concession was not passed on, then he will withdraw the concession. So, I would like to know whether the Finance Ministry, after monitoring this will take action to see if this concession is not passed on to the consumers, then at least those persons who have taken advantage will pass on that amount to the Consumers' Welfare Fund so that from that fund the consumer movement is given the fillip and from that movement we can get the prices reduced and the consumers get the benefits.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Regarding the first part of the question, I am very glad to inform the Member and through you all the Members of the House that the long-pending demand of the consumers for setting up the Consumers' Welfare Fund has now finally come true. The Central Government has constituted the Consumers' Welfare Fund and it has become operational. At the moment nearly Rs. 9 crores

are there in the Fund. We have already invited applications for getting aid from the Consumers' Welfare Fund. Upto 31st of May consumer organisations, consumers, Government and various other bodies can apply to get aid from the Consumers' Welfare Fund. After getting the applications, we will disburse the amount this year itself. So, the Consumers' Welfare Fund has become a reality.

In regard to the other part of the question, we will take it up with the Finance Ministry. I will also convey the sentiments of the House to the Finance Ministry.

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगी कि मंत्रालय जो नागरिक आपूर्ति और उपभोक्ता सम्बन्धी मामलों से सम्बन्धित है क्या इस मंत्रालय का यह दायित्व नहीं बनता कि सरकार की जो नई आर्थिक नीतियां बनें उन आर्थिक नीतियों के बारे में उपभोक्ता संगठनों से बातचीत करें ? उन आर्थिक नीतियों का हमारे उपभोक्ताओं पर जो विपरीत असर पड़ रहा है उस विपरीत असर को मद्देनजर रखते हुए क्या इस मंत्रालय ने कोई कमेटी गठित की है ? क्योंकि सरकार की जो नई नीति निर्धारित होती है उनमें विदेशी उद्योग को ज्यादा छूट दी जा रही है बजाय हमारे कृषि उद्योगों के मामलों के । पहली बात मैं यह जानना चाहती हूं कि क्या इस तरह की कोई कमेटी सरकार ने नियुक्त की है ? क्या यह सच है कि बार-बार उपभोक्ता संगठनों की ओर से मंत्रालय के पास इस बात की अपील की गई है कि वित्त मंत्रालय अगर कोई नीति लाता है तो पहले उपभोक्ता संगठनों से बात की जानी चाहिए ? अब तक इस संबंध में क्यों नहीं बात की गई ? इससे जुड़ा हुआ सवाल है कि पिछले दिनों दवा कम्पनियों ने जो उपभोक्ताओं से अतिरिक्त दाम वसूल किये थे उन दवा कम्पनियों से वापस दाम वसूल करके उपभोक्ता वेलफेयर फंड या कंज्यूमर वेलफेयर फंड को देने की आपकी कोई योजना है या नहीं ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Regarding the question of controlling of prices and of helping the consumers, in the Government there are already two committees—one is the Prices Committee of Ministers headed by the Finance Minister and there is another Committee, Committee of Secretaries headed by the Cabinet Secretary. Recently, in our Ministry also we have constituted a Committee headed by the Secretary, Civil Supplies. In that Committee there are representatives of various other Ministries to monitor the prices and also to take special action whenever we find that there are shortages of the essential commodities.

Regarding the suggestion that the Finance Ministry should consult the Consumer organisations also before finalising the Budget, that suggestion I have already conveyed to the Finance Ministry. So far as the question of reducing the prices of drugs is concerned, that question has to be handled by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers. We are continuously in touch with them. They have informed us that they have already brought 142 drugs under price control. The prices of these drugs have been reduced. The prices of the controlled drugs are decided every now and then in accordance with the current rate of excise duty.

Regarding the prices of other drugs, they are persuading the drug manufacturers to reduce the prices.

SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA : From the replies given to various supplementaries, it is very clear that the Ministry of Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution and the Ministry of Industry have no teeth to ensure that the concessions are passed on to the consumers. I would like to know from the Minister whether he will consider joining the representatives of the people such as the Panchayati Raj institutions and the urban local which have been given ample powers by amending the Constitution to ensure that excise concessions are passed on to the consumers. These two bodies, both urban and rural, if they join at the lower level, at the sub-divisional level with his Ministry, they can monitor the prices of various consumer goods and they can ensure that the excise concessions are passed on to the consumers by various companies. I think that this can be a very good mechanism. Would he consider this suggestion ?

Another part of my supplementary is—there is a very powerful political lobby or a group in the country which always support the hoarders, the blackmarketers—would he try to identify those people and try to weaken those forces and please the common man and the consumer ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : So far as involvement of the Panchayati Raj institutions and other local bodies is concerned, it is a very good proposal. It has to be examined.

So far as exploitation of consumers by industrialists and traders is concerned, it is a fact known to everybody. Nowadays the tragedy is that though the consumer movement has developed, that movement has not yet become powerful. We have a powerful industrial lobby in this country. We have other powerful lobbies. Now what we should do, all the political parties should do is to consciously develop a powerful consumer lobby. Only then we can actually prevent exploitation of the consumers by the industrialists and traders.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this particular question and the statement which comes out of it are a matter of great concern. There seems to be a conflict between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution. We have no doubt that the Ministry of Civil Supplies really means well for the consumers. But two things come out of the statement. Number one, the industries, several of them have not passed on the excise duty benefit to the consumers. Number two, which is most important is that the Government in no way can exercise their powers on such industries who do not pass on these benefits. Nowadays, we have got printed prices which include local taxes, etc. Whenever there is a price increase, the increase comes into effect immediately from the moment it is announced. But whenever there is a decrease in the price of a commodity, it never comes into effect. There are laws under the MRTP and the Essential Commodities Act which the Government wants to do away with. In other words, whatever little power you have, that also you want to forgo. If the Ministry of Finance does not want to do anything or it feels that it is unnecessary at this moment, may I know from the Minister of Civil Supplies, whether he would enact a law in this very session itself to ensure excise duty concessions are passed on to the consumers. As you have rightly said, consumers have no lobby because they do not have the required powers, which only the Government can provide. In the light of these things, would you consider amending the Act concerned in this very Session of

Parliament to ensure that the benefits are passed on to the consumer ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : There is no conflict between our Ministry and the various other administrative Ministries. The fact is that as per the present law, the Government is not in a position to legally take action against any of the industrialists. We can only persuade. Regarding bringing in a legislation, it is not an assigned duty of our Ministry. We will convey this to the other Ministries and we will take it up again.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : You are an independent Ministry. You can always come up with a laws as you did with the Consumer Protection Act.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Price control is not the duty of our Ministry. We have no right. We will examine it in consultation with the other Ministries. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SOM PAL : .... It is only to govern the people. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister has said that it is... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL : Sir, it is a very important question.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Unfortunately, it is not the function of this Ministry. (*Interruptions*). Please sit down. Everybody cannot be standing up like this. Mr. Satish Agarwal, do you want to say something ?

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL : Yes, Sir. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not agree with this part of the reply which is contained in part (e) of the answer which says, "The Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue, has informed that there is no provision in the Central Excise laws to ensure that excise duty concessions are passed on to the consumers". I do not agree with this part of the reply for the reason that when I was the Minister in charge of customs and excise in 1977-79, we saw to it that there was no overcharging and there was no fraud on the revenue. We had so many mechanisms within the excise law.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please put the question.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL : The provision is there. You have to enforce it. My point is, as the Minister in charge not only of civil supplies and public distribution but also of consumer protection and consumer affairs, will you, in this case, file a complaint before the National Consumer Forum against all those industries that they are cheating the consumers of those industries, that they do not pass on the heavy concessions granted by Parliament to the tune of crores of rupees ? Will you file such a complaint before the consumer forum ? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : That is not the role of the Government.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL : Why not ?

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Consumer protection is your duty.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please allow the Minister to reply. (*Interruptions*). The Minister is answering. Please allow him

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : As a result of the various steps taken by the Government, there is a growing consumer awareness now. And we are trying to make the consumer redressal for a more effective.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Please answer the question.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Every consumer has the right to approach the redressal forum to get redressal. The Member

puts a question. He has also got the right to approach the consumer forum and the Government will extend its support.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : You have a duty to protect the consumers. I have a right as a consumer. But you have a duty as the Minister in charge. Why can't you prosecute those persons ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : The duty of the Government is to bring in the law and also to constitute various... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SOM PAL : And not to implement.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He cannot go beyond his powers. He can do only what is within his powers. (*Interruptions*). Please listen to the Minister. Otherwise, I am going on to the next question.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Please let me complete. The duty of the Government is to constitute various redressal machinery. Because of the consistent persuasion of the Government, in our country, in all the 31 States, now we have the State Commissions and there are 455 district forums too. Every consumer is at liberty to approach the consumer forum and the Government will help the consumers. We have constituted a Consumer Welfare Fund. As per the provisions of the Fund, if the consumers are forced to spend a lot of money in one case, they can get reimbursement from the Fund. All these are done by the Government. Going to the court is not the role of the Government. It is the role of the consumer and the consumers' organisation. You can also go there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question No. 486.

ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में गरीबी रेखा से नीचे जीवन-यापन करने वाले व्यक्ति

*486. प्रो. विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा :

श्री राम जेठमलानी :

क्या **योजना और कार्यक्रम कार्यान्वयन** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि योजना आयोग द्वारा किये गये एक अध्ययन से यह तथ्य प्रकाश में आये हैं कि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में गरीबी-रेखा से नीचे जीवन-यापन करने वाले 90 प्रतिशत नागरिक देश के 10 राज्यों में ही केन्द्रित हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो यह राज्य कौन-कौन से हैं; इन राज्यों की अनुमानित कुल जनसंख्या कितनी है तथा यह जनसंख्या देश की कुल जनसंख्या का कितना प्रतिशत है;

(ग) क्या सरकार उपरोक्त तथ्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए इन राज्यों में गरीबी-उन्मूलन हेतु योजना में विशेष प्रावधान करने पर विचार कर रही है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में विस्तृत ब्यौरा क्या है ?

योजना और कार्यक्रम कार्यान्वयन मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री गिरिधर गोमांगो) : (क) से (घ) सभा पटल पर एक विवरण रखा जाता है ।

विवरण

योजना आयोग ने ऐसा कोई अध्ययन नहीं किया है जिससे यह पता चलता है कि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में गरीबी का प्रभाव 90

*सभा में यह प्रश्न प्रो. विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा द्वारा पूछा गया ।